

Message Text

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NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MRS. GRIFFIN

----- 035235

R 032237Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USCINCEUR

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KUWAIT PASS BAGHDAD, GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 3,
1976:

Q. YOU WERE LEFT WITH A FEW QUESTIONS YESTERDAY, I THINK.
ONE, I RECALL, DEALT WITH WHETHER NORTH KOREANS AND CUBANS
AND NORTH VIETNAMESE WERE IN SYRIA AS FAR AS THE STATE
DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED.

A. I LOOKED INTO THAT AS MUCH AS I COULD. I THINK THE
ANSWER IS THAT THERE WERE FOREIGNERS IN SYRIA--FOREIGN
MILITARY ADVISORS AND TECHNICIANS REPORTED IN SYRIA--BACK
AT THE TIME OF THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR. REGARDING ANY NEW
INFLUX SINCE THAT TIME, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE
THE REPORTS THAT HAVE BEEN SEEN ON IT.

Q. THE FIRST PART OF YOUR RESPONSE REFERS TO REPORTS IN
THE 1973 WAR. DO YOU MEAN PRESS REPORTS OR REPORTS OF
YOUR OWN?

A. NO, I WOULD NOT CHARACTERIZE THEM. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT
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THE REPORTS WERE. THERE WERE, AS I UNDERSTAND, MILITARY
ADVISORS AND TECHNICIANS REPORTED IN SYRIA. I CANNOT
CHARACTERIZE WHAT KIND OF REPORTS THESE WERE.

A. ANYHOW, DEALING WITH THE PRESENT, YOU SAY YOU HAVE
NO EVIDENCE.

A. I SAID REGARDING ANY NEW INFLUX, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE REPORTS THAT --

Q. DOES THAT MEAN THE OLD INFLUX IS STILL THERE?

A. MANY COUNTRIES USE FOREIGN ADVISORS FAMILIAR WITH THE EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED TO THOSE COUNTRIES. IT HAS BEEN KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT SYRIA HAS FOREIGN ADVISORS, BUT I CANNOT GET INTO THE DETAILS OF NUMBERS OR NATIONALITIES.

Q. SOME OF THOSE REPORTS GO BEYOND THERE BEING ADVISORS AND SAID SPECIFICALLY THAT THE NORTH KOREANS WERE FLYING DEFENSIVE MISSIONS DURING THE WAR. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT?

A. DURING THE 1973 WAR?

Q. YES.

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT NOW.

Q. WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE NOW IS EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE WHAT?

A. REPORTS THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INFLUX, A NEW INFLUX, OF FOREIGNERS INTO SYRIA IN THE CATEGORIES THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT; THAT IS, MILITARY ADVISORS OR TECHNICIANS, AND SO FORTH.

Q. MAY I PURSUE SYRIA A LITTLE FURTHER? WHEN YOU SAY YOU HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE REPORTS THAT THERE HAS BEEN A NEW INFLUX--FOR INSTANCE, YOU ARE SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW IF THERE ARE ANY NEW SOVIET TECHNICIANS; YOU ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOT SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW IF A TECHNICIAN WHO WAS THERE IN 1973 HASN'T BEEN REPLACED BY A TECHNICIAN LAST YEAR OR THIS YEAR? I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN BY INFLUX. I GUESS THAT IS THE PROBLEM--NEW SOURCES, OR A STEP UP--I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

A. I MEAN REGARDING REPORTS THAT THERE ARE NORTH

VIETNAMESE OR NORTH KOREAN OR CUBAN MILITARY ADVISORS OR TECHNICIANS WHO HAVE COME INTO SYRIA. THESE ARE PRESS REPORTS.

I AM SAYING WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THOSE PRESS REPORTS.

Q. YOU ARE NOT COVERING THE SOVIET PRESENCE? YOU ARE NOT DEALING WITH THAT IN NOT HAVING ANY EVIDENCE? YOU ARE JUST TALKING ABOUT THE THREE THINGS YOU WERE ASKED ABOUT?

A. I AM TALKING ABOUT REPORTS WE HAVE SEEN.

Q. TO BELABOR THE POINT THAT BARRY IS BRINGING UP: THE WORD EVIDENCE--WHAT IS EVIDENCE IN THIS CASE? IS IT VAGUELY SEEING THESE PEOPLE, SHAKING HANDS WITH NORTH VIETNAMESE, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT? OR IS IT THAT WE HAVE REPORTS, THAT WE KNOW THAT THEY ARE THERE, BUT WE HAVE NOT ACTUALLY PHYSICALLY CONTACTED THEM?

WHAT IS EVIDENCE? IS IT THE LEGAL USE OF THE WORD OR WHAT?

A. ON BACKGROUND, I WOULD SAY BY THAT WE MEAN INDEPENDENT INFORMATION APART FROM REPORTS IN THE PRESS. END BACKGROUND.

Q. AS FAR AS YOU KNOW IN THAT THERE ARE FOREIGNERS BEYOND SOVIETS IN SYRIA--YOU SAYING THERE ARE NO NEW ONES SINCE '73?

A. I AM SAYING THAT IT WAS KNOWN AND WAS REPORTED AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE TIME OF THE OCTOBER WAR 1973 THAT THERE WERE FOREIGN MILITARY ADVISORS IN SYRIA.

Q. THEY ARE STILL THERE?

A. I DO NOT REALLY KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THEY HAVE LEFT?

A. NO, I DO NOT.

Q. LET ME ASK YOU THE THRESHHOLD QUESTION. HAS THE EMBASSY BEEN ASKED TO FIND OUT IF THERE ARE NORTH KOREANS, CUBANS AND NORTH VIETNAMESE IN SYRIA? IS IT OF INTEREST OR CONCERN TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO TRY TO

ESTABLISH ONE WAY OR THE OTHER?

A. I WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. COULD YOU, PLEASE--BECAUSE JUST LAST WEEK YOU WERE COMPLIMENTING SYRIA FOR ITS BEHAVIOR IN LEBANON, SO I

TAKE IT YOU ARE MONITORING SYRIA FAIRLY CLOSELY AND, I SUPPOSE, WOULD BE INTERESTED IN WHETHER CUBANS ARE IN SYRIA SINCE YOU ARE ALWAYS FLAILING AT THE CUBANS FOR GOING INTO ANGOLA AND OTHER PLACES. YOU DON'T FIND NORMAL--

A. WE ARE CERTAINLY INTERESTED IN THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS OR ANY OTHERS IN SYRIA

Q. YOU ISSUED A MAP LAST WEEK OR THE WEEK BEFORE OF FOREIGN--I THINK IT WAS A DOD MAP THAT LISTED, THAT SHOWED LITTLE SYMBOLS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD--SOVIETS AND CUBANS. DON'T YOU HAVE THAT MAP HANDY? I DON'T.

A. I DON'T HAVE IT HANDY.

Q. RIGHT OFFHAND, IT STRUCK ME THAT IT HAD NOTHING BUT SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS LISTED THERE. DOES THAT MEAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT THERE ARE NOTHING BUT SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS NOW IN SYRIA?

A. I REALLY CAN'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTION. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT YOU LOOK AT THAT MAP WHICH I THINK WAS ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

Q. BUT YOU DID SAY YOU WOULD TRY TO GET US MORE INFORMATION?

A. I WILL TRY, YES.

Q. PARDON ME IF YOU ANSWERED THIS BEFORE, BUT IS THERE GOING TO BE A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE STAY OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL?

A. I DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS GOING TO BE. I AM NOT SURE ABOUT THAT, BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS ANY COMMUNIQUE ISSUED, NO.

Q. ISN'T IT USUAL TO HAVE A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED WHEN TWO HEADS OF A COUNTRY -- WHEN A PRIME MINISTER OF A COUNTRY--

A. IN THE CASE OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL, HE HAS BEEN HERE A NUMBER OF TIMES. THERE IS NO SET PROCEDURE AND NO OBLIGATION THAT WE SHOULD -- THERE IS NO PROCEDURE THAT CALLS FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A COMMUNIQUE AFTER EACH VISIT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION OF YESTERDAY AS TO WHEN EGYPT MADE KNOWN ITS INTEREST IN C-130'S?

A. I WENT BACK INTO THAT, AND I JUST CANNOT GO ANY FURTHER THAN TO SAY DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN HELD ON A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT -- FROM TIME TO TIME BUT I CANNOT GIVE YOU A SPECIFIC ON WHEN THAT PARTICULAR REQUEST WAS MADE.

Q. WOULD YOU CARE TO REPEAT WHAT WAS SAID AT THE TIME OF HIS VISIT, THAT HE CAME HERE WITH NO SHOPPING LIST, WITH NO SPECIFIC WEAPON REQUESTS?
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A. I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK THAT. I THINK THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. YOU STILL THINK THAT IS CORRECT?

A. YES.

Q. YOU SAID HERE THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT SIGNED A PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION TO PROVIDE C-130'S TO EGYPT.

A. I SAID THERE HAS BEEN NO DECISION.

Q. THEN LET ME ASK IT AS A QUESTION. HAS THE PRESIDENT SIGNED THE PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION TO PROVIDE C-130'S TO EGYPT? WOULD YOU FIND OUT IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE ANSWER?

A. I CAN TRY. ANY DECISION ON THAT BY THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CONGRESS, BUT I CANNOT TAKE IT BEYOND THAT.

Q. I AM ASKING A VERY SPECIFIC QUESTION. IT IS AN ACT THAT THE PRESIDENT NORMALLY TAKES BEFORE SUCH AN ACTION.

A. I WILL TRY TO FIND OUT FOR YOU.

Q. YOU SAID "DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN HELD ON A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT" AND THEN YOU DIDN'T GIVE THE NOUN. WHAT NOUN DID YOU HAVE IN MIND?

A. OCCASIONS.

FOLLOWING THE BRIEFING NEWSMEN WERE SUPPLIED WITH THE FOLLOWING ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE PRESIDENT SIGNED THE PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION TO PROVIDE C-130'S TO EGYPT:

QUOTE NO PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION HAS BEEN SIGNED ON
THIS MATTER. IF A PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION SHOULD BE
SIGNED, IT WILL BE PART OF OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH
CONGRESS. END QUOTE.

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